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American Whig Society

Extracts From By-Laws



EXTRACTS FROM THE BY-LAWS
OF THE
AMERICAN WHIG SOCIETY
OF
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
RELATING TO THE LITERARY SECTIONS AND THE
ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Princeton, N. J.
Published by order of the Society
1915

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In Exchange.

R. R. Does

JUN 30 1916

FOREWORD

The Constitution of the American Whig Society has been printed in complete form. It has not seemed wise to print the entire body of the By-Laws, but only that portion of them relating to the literary sections and to the election of officers. An indexed copy of both Constitution and By-laws is kept on the desk of the Secretary of the Society and is always open to inspection.

CHANGES IN THE LITERARY SECTIONS

Sweeping changes have been made in the literary sections, to take effect at the beginning of the college year 1915-1916. There are two essential points in these changes. In the first place, a sharp distinction between active and non-active members will hereafter be made, with compulsory attendance at the literary exercises for active members. In the second place, a flexible plan of topic discussion will supplant the old rigid system of extemporaneous speeches and formal debates.

A word concerning the purpose of this change will

not be out of place at this point. Formal debates of the old style are very interesting, provided the external stimulus of competition and rivalry is present, as in intercollegiate debates. But as a weekly exercise within Hall, the usefulness of such debates has been steadily undermined as their artificiality and insincerity have become more and more their prominent features. In a word, the debates have become something of a bore. In the future, therefore, debating will be encouraged rather than forced.

A debate will arise naturally when a number of men with varying views are assigned the same topic. Moreover, the Chairman may at any time allow a speaker to substitute for his regularly assigned topic the continuation of a subject already under discussion. Formal debates are not forbidden, but will be arranged only when especially requested or when required for the purposes of prize contests and inter-Hall contests.

Under this flexible arrangement, there will still be plenty of opportunity for extemporaneous speaking. Frequently the subjects will not be announced in advance.

It is hoped that this new plan will possess all the

merit of the old and that it will produce a greater interest in the literary work. Certainly it will afford training in a more natural and useful form of public speaking.

BY-LAWS

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

ARTICLE I

SECTION 1. The House shall hold its stated business meetings at five o'clock on the second Tuesday afternoon of each quarter while college orders are in force.

ARTICLE XX

SECTION 1. The annual election of officers of the Society shall be held at the first regular quarterly business meeting after the Easter recess.

Sec. 2. A member to be nominated for the office of President, Treasurer or Secretary must have his nomination signed by ten men and handed in to the Secretary three days before the election.

Sec. 3. All men who have been duly nominated for the office of President, Treasurer, or Secretary, having been defeated for the office for which they were nominated, are eligible for any subsequent

election, the order of election being President, Treasurer and Secretary.

Sec. 4. At the annual election the Whig Representatives for the Debating Committee shall be chosen, one from the Junior and one from the Sophomore class.

THE LITERARY SECTIONS

ARTICLE XVI

SECTION I. The Undergraduate members of the Society who take part in its literary exercises shall be enrolled as active members. A newly initiated member of the Society shall be considered an active member unless he shall signify to the Council his intention to the contrary. At the beginning of each college year each member shall be classified as during the preceding year unless he shall express to the Council a desire to be changed.

Sec. 2. The Council shall divide the active members into sections of from fifteen to twenty men with no necessary regard to class, except that the freshmen shall, as far as possible, have sections of their own.

Sec. 3. Each section shall meet in Hall one night each week while college orders are in force.

Sec. 4. The officers of each section shall be a Chairman, who shall preside over its meetings, and a Clerk, who shall keep the minutes of the meetings, and any other officers which the section may wish to elect. The Chairman and the Clerk shall compose the managing committee of the section. These officers shall be elected at the beginning of each quarter of the college year and shall be ineligible for the same office during successive quarters.

Sec. 5. Each member of a section shall have the privilege of speaking at each of its meetings.

Sec. 6. Topics for discussion shall be assigned to each member of a section by its managing committee, ordinarily one week in advance. A change of subject, agreeable to the member concerned, may be permitted by the Chairman at any time. From two to five minutes shall be allowed each member for the discussion of his topic and no credit shall be given for a discussion of less than two minutes.

Sec. 7. At one meeting during each term, each active member, instead of discussing a topic, shall deliver a written and memorized oration, which shall not be less than four and not more than eight minutes in length.

Sec. 8. At the end of a term each member who has

attended nine meetings, discussed eight topics, and delivered one oration shall receive credit for a term of active membership. However, for the first term of freshman year the requirements shall be seven attendances, six topics, and one oration. A member who has fallen short of this requirement shall receive credit merely for the speeches made, unless, with the permission of the Council, he shall substitute two extra attendances for each attendance needed, two extra topics for each topic needed, and two extra orations for each oration needed.

Sec. 9. The following substitutions for work within the section shall be allowed:

(1) A debate or extemporaneous speech given in a University course, or in a prize contest within the Hall, or in an inter-Hall contest, shall count as one topic.

(2) An oration given in a University course, or in a prize contest within the Hall, including participation in the Wood Prize Convention, or in an inter-Hall contest, shall count as one oration.

(3) A member who takes part in an intercollegiate debate, whether freshman or varsity, shall be given credit equivalent to a term of active

membership, including the eight topics and one oration.

(4) A member who reaches only the final trials for such a debating team shall be given credit equivalent to one oration, two topics, and three attendances for the current term.

(5) A member who takes part only in the trials within Hall for such a debating team shall be given credit for two topics and two attendances for the current term.

(6) No other substitutions of credit shall be allowed unless requested of the Council and approved by the Council.

Sec. 10. A member who, at the end of the first term of his senior year, has credit for five terms of active membership, or four terms of active membership and eight topics and one oration in addition, shall receive a diploma from Hall. These diplomas shall be awarded at a graduation exercise to be held (except for 1916) during the third quarter of the college year. A senior who subsequently completes his credits shall receive a diploma upon request to the Council.

Sec. 11. In case there is a resident Graduate Secretary of the Society, the details of the organi-

zation and supervision of the literary sections shall be attended to by him, subject to the approval of the Council.

Sec. 12. The Graduate Secretary and the undergraduate Secretary shall at the end of the college year 1914-1915 determine what credit in terms of this new system is due to all present undergraduate members of the Society and it shall be so entered upon the records of the Society.

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